

By Shaun Tandon

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hK8ILcmcF3V4SS25P77O26FOxbNg>

Leonard Leo, chair of the **US Commission on International Religious Freedom**, an advisory body, said Vietnam improved its record only when its "feet were held to the fire."

"But once Vietnam, with US help, joined the World Trade Organization in 2007, religious freedom and human rights advocates have experienced waves of arrests," Leo said.

Walter Lohman, director of Asian studies at the conservative Heritage Foundation, said that while the United States had its concerns, Vietnam has at least shown willingness to engage.